

State of the Town Address

Hello friends,

I am so excited and proud to share the amazing year we have had at the Town of Corning but first, I want to thank all of you for your support, grace, and kindness. I also want to thank the Town Board for sitting through extra meetings and helping create new policies (to keep us current with New York State requirements), managing the budget, and helping to grow new ideas. I could not be blessed with a harder working, more supportive board. Although being new has had its share of challenges, the Town has made amazing strides that myself and the board could not be prouder of.

First is our playgrounds and parks. Using the COVID funding from New York State, we have purchased equipment for Clark Street and Shaun Lane Memorial Park. When the weather improves this Spring, our building and grounds crew will be creating a place for residents to enjoy. The concrete pad has been poured on Clark Street for the gazebo this Spring. I am also continuing to research how we could build a splashpad for residents to enjoy after the positive feedback that was received from the numerous submitted surveys. We have three of the best building and grounds employees who work diligently to maintain our parks and playgrounds and create the best environment for our residents to enjoy. I truly can't thank them enough for all that they do.

Movies in the park will continue this coming spring and summer. We are also looking at winter location options to give entertainment during the colder months. Many residents liked the idea of music in the park with local bands and singers. I will be exploring this option as we move forward into the warmer months as well. Creating a town that helps bring residents together is truly important to me and I am excited to move forward with new ideas. Halloween next year, I would like to have a pumpkin hunt and offer prizes to the children who participate. This year's "It's a Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown" movie was a success and children truly enjoyed painting pumpkins and "Touch-a-Truck" at the firehouse. I am hoping to expand on that next year and would love for any residents interested in helping to reach out for a community events

committee. So many of our residents have shared amazing ideas that I would love to help explore.

Finances remain solid. This years 2025 budget stayed \$28,000 under the 2% tax cap. We have a stable reserve fund and a board who has been exceptionally fiscally responsible. The town board paid for an outside audit due to the changes in leadership which noted no concerns. This audit is available on the town website for residents to view under the Town Council tab.

The board also signed a fair CSEA union contract with the highway department covering the next three years. We have an amazing group of highway employees who work hard keeping our roads and residents safe. I could not be prouder to work with such a great group of people who are truly dedicated to our town. The contract is also available on the website for residents to view under the Highway Department tab.

In working to best utilize our funds, bids were placed for cleaning, dog control, and mowing contracts. With this bid process, the town has saved approximately \$14,000 annually in hiring a new cleaner. We have continued our mowing service with a three (3) year contract that now includes landscaping of the town hall with a very minimal cost increase. We have hired a new dog control officer who we are excited to have start on January 1, 2025. All of her information will be posted on the town website.

We explored new healthcare insurance and have changed from Insure One to the Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium (GTCMHIC). This change has saved the town approximately \$85,000 annually. I am excited to work with this group and know that we are trying to keep healthcare costs manageable when nationwide they are increasing by leaps and bounds.

The Town Hall is almost completely done with the remodel. The board approved using COVID funds and a reserve fund specifically for the building to remodel the inside and replace the 20+ year old roof. This was at no direct cost to the taxpayer and we are now blessed with a clean, updated building that residents can be proud of. With the completion of the town remodel, the front entrance has been moved. **Our new town address is 25 South Elm**

Street. This change makes it easier for visitors to find the main entrance to the building and have an accurate location in case of an emergency.

One final accomplishment is the approval of step one of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). \$47,500 was awarded to the Town of Corning which will cover the cost of surveys and information needed to qualify for the full CDBG award. These additional funds will help low to moderate income residents repair and upgrade their homes.

Upcoming projects we are beginning to explore is running a sewer line down part of State Route 352. We will be exploring grants and state funding to minimize any cost to the town residents. This project is in hopes of growing businesses and keeping property taxes manageable.

I will be exploring more grants and state funding for town improvement projects as they become available. I realize the importance of having residents see where their money is being spent and we are working hard to do good things for amazing people. I will continue to keep the town website and social media updated. If you have not joined the town's Facebook, Instagram, or "X" page I would highly encourage you to add us. On these pages I post upcoming events, projects, meeting agendas etc. I know how important transparency is and we work hard to maintain this.

Thank you again, truly, for all of your kind words and support. Please reach out if you would like to help with a community project committee or to just share ideas in making our town even better than we are today.

Onwards....

Jenniffer Mullen, Town of Corning Supervisor

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